

## The Week At WHMS

Week of December 6, 2021



### Thought for the week:

“A people without the knowledge of their past history, origin, and culture is like a tree without roots.”

– Marcus Garvey

### Weekly Calendar: *Annual coat and winter gear drive through 12/13 – donate in main lobby*

<u>Monday</u>	<u>Tuesday</u>	<u>Wednesday</u>	<u>Thursday</u>	<u>Friday</u>	<u>Sat/Sun</u>
12/6	12/7	12/8	12/9	12/10	12/11-12/12
Day 1	Day 2	Day 1	Day 2	Day 1	
All day – Students to spend 10 minutes of SS class on Thought-Exchange	1:30p – 7 <sup>th</sup> grade virtual field trip “to” Jamestown, Virginia (see separate email for details)	1:15p – PST meeting  <b>Club Meets:</b> Comic Book; Dignity & Tolerance	<b>Club Meets:</b> Mathletes  4:45p – Boys basketball @ Lawrence	8:45a – RTI meeting  4:45p – Boys basketball @ Island Park	
10:00a – admin PD	3:00p – Faculty meeting	4:45p – Girls volleyball @ East Rockaway			
5:00p – Track meet @ Long Beach	4:45p – Boys basketball @ Academy Charter  7:30p – BOE policy meeting and work session (HS VCR)				

### Instructional tips: (from *Edutopia*)

#### “Extending the Silence” by John McCarthy

*Giving students several seconds to think after asking a question—and up to two minutes for some questions—improves their learning.*

How long do you think teachers pause, on average, after asking a question?

Several studies from the 1970s on have looked into the effect that the amount of time teachers pause after asking a question has on learners. In visiting many classrooms in the United States and other

parts of the world, I've found that, with few exceptions, these studies are still accurate. For example, according to work done by [Mary Budd Rowe](#) in 1972 and [Robert J. Stahl](#) in 1994, pausing for three or more seconds showed a noticeable positive impact on learning. Yet the average length that teachers pause was found to be 0.9 seconds.

Wow.

I've observed this phenomenon in many classrooms, and there is a real need to increase the time granted to students to process what they know and to make sense of what they do not understand.

In differentiating instruction, process and learning preference are the keys. Process is how learners make sense of ideas, compose their thinking, and prepare a thoughtful answer. Learning preference, in the case of questions posed to the whole class, refers to how some students prefer to silently process the content, keeping their own counsel (Internal Thinkers), while others prefer to talk or express their thinking with an audience as a sounding board (External Thinkers).

The External Thinkers, those go-to students who can be counted on to talk within the first three seconds, may be shaping their ideas as they talk—they haven't had sufficient time to fully process but speak out anyway. Meanwhile, the Internal Thinkers have also had insufficient time to process, but don't feel comfortable responding.

One solution is for teachers to pause for five to 15 seconds before calling on students. The silence for some may feel unbearably long. Yet consider that the fastest male and female 100-meter sprinters in the world run at or under 10 seconds. The world record is under 10 seconds, which goes by quickly. Why not offer a similar amount of time for students to consider their responses to questions that require deep thinking?

### **STRATEGIES FOR PROVIDING STUDENTS WITH TIME TO THINK**

**Provide wait time:** Give students five to 15 seconds to formulate a response to a question for which they should know the answer. Not every learner processes thinking at the same speed. Quality should be measured in the content of the answer, not the speediness.

**Give think time:** Give students 20 seconds to two minutes to make sense of questions that require analysis to synthesize concepts into a different construct or frame. You can aid this by encouraging journaling, silent reflection, or partner discussions. Giving such chunks of time honors the work being asked of students. Quick responses probably mean that the question did not stretch the learners' understanding. After the allotted time, any student can be called on to share their response.

**Teach reflection:** Coach students on the value and practice of reflection. Educators and students may appear to be uncomfortable with silence, hence the typical one-second pause time. Silence may be equated with nothing happening.

In reality, when students are provided with structured ways to practice thinking and specific directions about what to accomplish within the silent time, they can become more productive during reflection. [Think From the Middle](#) is a collection of approaches for students to hone their thinking processes during reflection and collaborative communication.

**Teach students how to manage a conversation:** It's a beautiful thing to witness students running thoughtful conversations around topics that combine curriculum and real-world connections. Establish a culture for students to engage in such conversations, and they'll soon be doing most of the heavy lifting during the lesson.

One powerful example I've witnessed in Michigan and Texas uses a guide for student-led conversation prompts called [Talk Moves](#). This list of conversation stems provides students with communication tools for participating in and sustaining discussions.

### **PLACING STUDENTS AT THE CENTER OF LEARNING**

We want students to become independent learners who can navigate challenging material and situations. Students learn at different paces, which seems less about intelligence and more about the time barriers put in the path of learning. There may be a place for timed responses and answering questions under the pressure of a clock, yet there are no standards that say that students should master concepts in less than one second.

Most people need adequate time to process their thoughts if they are expected to contribute to a conversation. Life is not a 30-minute game show with rapid-fire questions that require low-level answers, plus commercial breaks. Even if it were, one would need time to develop and master the processing skills to compete.

For full article see <https://www.edutopia.org/article/extending-silence>

#### **Items of importance:**

- Our annual canned food drive has concluded, but... the food pantry happily accepts donations year-round to support our families who struggle with food insecurity. Students can bring donations to Mr. Murray or Ms. Lubliner any time.
- **WEATHER NOTICE:** we have outdoor recess, outdoor AM line-up, and outdoor PE daily unless it is raining. Please make sure your child has appropriate clothing and outerwear. We only stay indoors if the temperature falls below 30° or the wind chill falls below 28°
- **Have you downloaded the West Hempstead App yet?** It is available in the App Store and Google Play, just search "West Hempstead." This will let you keep track of everything happening in our school and access documents such as this "Week @ WHMS" newsletter.
- *Let me know when you have exciting learning taking place that I can tweet out and be sure to tag @WH\_MSRRAMS if you tweet yourself*

#### **Items of interest:**

- We are pleased to offer our staff the "Parents as Partners" webinar series with Educational Consultant and Trainer Dr. Jennifer Bashant. These free webinars are accessible live or as recordings. Go to <https://www.whufsd.com/page/parents-as-partners-webinar-series> for more information.
- Our Middle School Drama Production of *Matilda* is available to view at: <https://tinyurl.com/pwsa3n8f> with the password: **21varsitY@** ENJOY!

- Our club calendar is available on the website at: <https://www.whufsd.com/o/whms/browse/221769>. Students should listen to AM announcements for the most up-to-date information about meeting dates and locations.
- The **extra help schedule** can be found at: [https://core-docs.s3.amazonaws.com/documents/asset/uploaded\\_file/1553808/Extra-Help\\_Schedule\\_MS\\_21-22.pdf](https://core-docs.s3.amazonaws.com/documents/asset/uploaded_file/1553808/Extra-Help_Schedule_MS_21-22.pdf). Students should take advantage of teachers' availability to do their best work.
- The Homework Center is open after school on Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday. See details below:

## Homework Center Information: 21-22

Homework Center is open 2:45-3:45 on the following days

<u>Day</u>	<u>Teacher</u>	<u>Room</u>	<u>Notes</u>
Monday	Ms. Healey	257	Support available for any subject, or just a quiet place to work after school.
Wednesday	Ms. Geiger	17	
Thursday	Ms. Rogan	16	

### “COVID Corner” Information:

- I cannot say how vital it is that **if your child, or anyone in your home, feels sick, your child MUST REMAIN HOME FROM SCHOOL.** Call the nurse or Mr. Murray for advice on when it is okay to return to school.
- Please remember to **send your child** to school **with a** reusable or paper **mask each day**. A number of students are “forgetting” their masks on a regular basis and asking for masks at the front door.
- **Please send your child to school with a refillable water bottle.** Our water fountains are “COVID-safe” and only the water bottle filler function is available.
- For more information about the COVID vaccine for 5-15 year-olds, go to: <https://covid19vaccine.health.ny.gov>

**Looking ahead:** *Our annual coat and winter gear drive began 11/29 – donate through 12/13*

Monday, December 13: *Day 2*

- Last day for winter coats and gear donations

Tuesday, December 14: *Day 1*

- Department meetings, 3:00pm
- Board of Education Meeting (NOTE, date change from calendar), 7:30pm @ HS VCR

Wednesday, December 15: *Day 2*

- *Interim progress report comments/grades due in PowerSchool by 9am*
- PST meeting, 1:15pm

Thursday, December 16: *Day 1*

- Enjoy a quiet Thursday

Friday, December 17: *Day 2*

- **Q2 interim reports viewable in PowerSchool**
- RTI meeting, 8:45am